ASTROS 5, DODGERS 3

Houston rides early rally to 2-1 World Series lead

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COMING SUNDAY: UP TO $202 IN COUPONS

ARIZONA REPUBLIC

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CANCELED FLIGHTS?

Environmentalists: Drilling for Alaska refuge's oil could affect bird species that migrate to Arizona during winter

JOSHUA BOWLING
THE REPUBLIC | AZCENTRAL.COM

As the U.S. House and Senate review options for the next fiscal year's budget, lawmakers have quietly opened the door to oil exploration and drilling in more than a million acres of protected land that some have called one of the most pristine places on Earth.

Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which sprawls over more than 19 million acres, and its potential oil reserves have for years been hot-button issues among conservationists and lawmakers.

Although the refuge lies thousands of miles away from Arizona, the surrounding debate has received attention from state lawmakers and conservation groups. What happens in the Arctic refuge can affect migration patterns for an array of birds that visit Arizona every year.

Some see oil exploration and drilling on a 1.5 million-acre slice of the refuge as a boon to the economy and a way to wean the U.S. off foreign-oil dependence. Critics of the plan see it as a threat to the numerous wildlife species that take shelter there and to migration patterns that take them around the world.

In recent House and Senate budget proposals, energy committees were asked to cut billions in deficits. Although the proposals don't specifically mandate

See REFUGE, Page 6A

More online

Find more coverage of the environment at **grandaz.azcentral.com**.

Long-billed dowitchers migrate between Alaska and Arizona every year. CHRIS MCCREEDY/ SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC

3 fired in probe of library flooding

Report: 6 workers knew about sprinkler problems

JESSICA BOEHM
THE REPUBLIC | AZCENTRAL.COM

Phoenix fired three city employees, demoted two and suspended one following an investigation that showed the severe flooding at Burton Barr Central Library was preventable.

At least six employees knew, or should have known, about leaks in a sprinkler system dating back to 2008 but failed to address the issue, according to a report prepared by the city attorney.

The library will not reopen until at least June, and repairs could cost $10 million.

Inspectors warned the city about the holes in writing multiple times since 2014, including in a report conducted six weeks before a July windstorm caused the fire-sprinkler system to confuse dust with smoke. That activated the sprinkler system and caused a pipe in the roof to burst, flooding the building.

Even prior to the inspector's warnings, the report indicates, multiple city employees knew the sprinkler system

See LIBRARY, Page 17A

"I am sorry to our customers, and I'm disappointed that inaction on the part of city employees has caused inconvenience."

ED ZUERCHER
PHOENIX CITY MANAGER

Money for kids' health care may run out in weeks

MARY JO PITZL
THE REPUBLIC | AZCENTRAL.COM

Gov. Doug Ducey was not shy in making clear his position on repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act.

But he's been quiet on another federally funded health-care program: the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, known in Arizona as KidsCare.

It provides health coverage to kids whose families make too much to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to buy insurance on their own.

Unlike "Obamacare," as the ACA is known, CHIP has lost its funding, because Congress failed to reauthorize the legislation that pays for the program by the Sept. 30 deadline.

Arizona's KidsCare account is running on fumes. Boosted by an extra $22 million in leftover federal money, the program is still on track to run out of money by late November.

See KIDSCARE, Page 14A

Flake's exit shows it's Trump's GOP now

But what does that mean for the future of the party?

DAN NOWICKI, RONALD J. HANSEN AND YVONNE WINGETT SANCHEZ
THE REPUBLIC | AZCENTRAL.COM

U.S. Sen. Jeff Flake hasn't said exactly when he realized he could not win reelection. But the Republican Party dynamics that prompted his exit from the 2018 race, which Flake announced in dramatic fashion Tuesday, were foreshadowed by some of his allies as they took measure of the electorate last month.

On the eve of the Republican runoff for an open Alabama Senate seat, a super PAC aligned with Majority Leader Mitch McConnell offered a stark assessment of the political mood toward establishment Republicans such as Flake.

"No other person, group or issue has the gravitational pull on Republican primary voters that (President) Donald Trump commands," the Senate Leadership Fund stated in a Sept. 26 memo first obtained by the *New York Times*. The memo noted GOP voters' affinity for Trump exceeded that of even their own political party.

And who did these voters blame for the problems in the nation's capital? People like Flake.

"The answer to what is wrong in Washington is the Republican Congress," the memo stated. "This narrative is driven by Trump himself, and it resonates with primary voters who believe the Republican Congress 'isn't doing enough' ... to advance the President's agenda."

Less than a month later, Flake, R-Ariz., one of Trump's most visible antagonists, conceded he could not win his primary in the current Republican

See GOP, Page 8A

ALSO

Buckhorn Baths sold: Nearly two decades after the closure of the Buckhorn Baths Motel in Mesa, the property at the corner of Main Street and Recker Road has a new owner, courtesy of a $2.15 million deal that closed in August, a developer says. **3A**

We're No. 2: Only one city, Memphis, ranks higher than Phoenix when it comes to evictions from apartments, according to a national research company. The Phoenix metro area is estimated to have an eviction rate of 5.9 percent, according to Apartment List. **15A**

NATION & WORLD

LM OTERO/AP

Historians, journalists and others study newly released documents related to the JFK assassination. 1B

USA TODAY Nation & World: Section B

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